



United States Environmental  
Protection Agency Region 8

Office of Communication and Public  
Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota,  
Utah, Wyoming

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

KATHIE ATENCIO 303-312-6803  
DAVID OSTRANDER 303-312-6931

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**DENVER**--Redevelopment of portions of North Stapleton Airport will receive a \$200,000 boost from the Environmental Protection Agency's "Brownfields" program.

Brownfields are abandoned, idled, or under-used industrial and commercial properties which may have been contaminated by earlier industry, complicating redevelopment plans with fears of liability and cleanup costs.

The funds will be used to conduct detailed environmental testing of groundwater under the northern portion of the former airport and a neighboring parcel to be purchased by Commerce City. These studies will help to clarify uncertainties about redevelopment uses and the need for cleanup - if any - required for those parcels of land.

"That's just what Brownfields projects are designed to do," said Max Dodson who directs the Superfund program in six western states, "remove that uncertainty so local lenders and developers can approach a site with confidence. This project provides still another opportunity for the City and County of Denver to show leadership similar to what occurred at the Home Depot redevelopment project. It also complements Commerce City's Sand Creek effort."

Metropolitan-area businesses and foundations strongly support the redevelopment of Stapleton. A Citizens Advisory Board, comprised of representatives from local neighborhoods, businesses and local governments in Denver, Aurora and Commerce City, will oversee redevelopment of the area.

"Here's a great example of the Federal Government working in partnership with local governments and businesses to rejuvenate our urban landscape," said U.S. Representative Diana DeGette. "With the EPA's help, the Stapleton Airport area will become, once again, a valuable and important part of our community."

"At Stapleton we plan to create a community that will ultimately provide about 35,000 jobs in employment centers that will be mixed with residential areas, public transportation, and commercial services," said Denver Mayor Wellington Webb.

"Redevelopment of the adjoining Arsenal property will link neighborhoods that previously were isolated by the two facilities."

Commerce City Mayor David Busby said, "This grant will help Commerce City develop the property as a gateway to the Arsenal Wildlife Refuge."

Patti Shwayder, executive director of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, said, "The awarding of this grant and the study it will finance are important steps forward in the redevelopment of a portion of the former Stapleton Airport. The Brownfields concept, which also is used by the State Health Department to expedite the cleanup of contaminated sites, is very useful in removing impediments to restoring these sites and in putting them back into productive use more quickly."

The Brownfields Initiative is part of a Clinton Administration commitment to help cities clean up and redevelop abandoned property. Since 1993, 115 projects have received over \$20 million.

The North Stapleton grant will be the third such grant in Colorado. The Sand Creek Corridor received a \$200,000 Brownfields grant in 1994 and recently the City of Englewood was selected as a regional pilot to receive a \$200,000 grant.

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